

bring much needed diversity to our Federal judiciary.

Given her varied professional background, years of appellate experience, and her accomplishments on the bench, Judge Thomas will be an excellent addition to the Ninth Circuit. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting her nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask my friend and colleague from Illinois, who is the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, if he could actually work with us—I have already reached out to him and some other Democrat Senators—on this very reasonable request. He has been here a lot longer than I have. But every time there is a Ninth Circuit judge who has been nominated, I have met with him because it is so important to my State. Alaska has 1 Ninth Circuit judge, and there are 29 judges on the court.

So I would ask, respectfully, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee to work with me because this is a precedent that I don't think any Senator, Democrat or Republican, wants.

Literally, you are going to have the White House saying "You know what? You are not on the Judiciary Committee, so your advice-and-consent role under article II, section 2, is null and void" because the White House Counsel wants to "protect the judges"? Protect them from what?

So I want to work with my colleagues—all of them—particularly the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, as he has a lot of influence, I am sure, with the White House and the White House Counsel's Office, but, again, I encourage my colleagues to vote no until we start getting meetings and are able to do our duty. This is going to benefit my colleagues on both sides of the aisle over the long term, and it will strengthen this body, not weaken it, which is what is happening right now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me in closing say: I think we should be respectful and try to work with one another and cooperate. That also includes the over 100 nominees sitting on this calendar who have been obstructed by two or three Republican Members for weeks, if not months. If there is going to be fairness, let's make sure that the road travels in both directions.

I yield back all remaining time.

VOTE ON MOTION TO DISCHARGE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to discharge the nomination of Holly A. Thomas, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

The yeas and nays have been previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 502 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden
Heinrich	Peters	

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Johnson	Shelby
Collins	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	
Graham	Portman	

NOT VOTING—4

Cassidy	Lummis
Cramer	Rounds

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The nomination is discharged and will be placed on the calendar.

The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

FREEDOM TO VOTE ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I come to the floor to speak in support of legislation that is critical to our democracy—the Freedom to Vote Act. And this is a bill that was the product of work by many, many Senators from across the country with different views but all committed to one thing: our democracy.

And I want to thank Senator SCHUMER for bringing the group together as well as the other Senators: Senator MANCHIN, whose name is on the bill, whose experience as secretary of state really was so helpful to us in forming this bill and also realizing the differences between so many jurisdictions, including world jurisdictions, that have different staffing levels and different needs; Senator MERKLEY, an expert on election law; Senator PADILLA, also a former secretary of state; Senator KING, bringing his independent spirit from the State of Maine; Senator KAINE, former civil rights lawyer; Senator TESTER, who sees this and understands all of this firsthand in the

State of Montana, where, by the way, for decades they have had same-day registration, which when you look at the States, whether they are red or blue—States that have same-day registration, like my State—tend to have some of the highest voter turnouts in the country, and, sadly, they have disposed of that in the State of Montana recently; and Senator WARNOCK, from the great State of Georgia, who was the host, along with Senator OSSOFF, of a Rules Committee field hearing we recently held in Georgia, where we saw firsthand why so many leaders in the business community across the country and in Georgia have voiced their concern about a bill that recently passed there that would literally say that you cannot vote on weekends during the runoff period, during a critical period of votes in Georgia.

That was a group that came together, different views, different levels of experience, but all committed to one idea: that democracy will prevail.

The freedom to vote is fundamental to all of our freedoms. That is why this bill is called the Freedom to Vote Act. It ensures that people are part of the franchise and that government is accountable to the people, but this fundamental right that is the very foundation of our system of government is under attack.

Since the 2020 election, we have seen a persistent and coordinated assault on the freedom to vote in States across the country. These attacks on our democracy demand a Federal response. The Constitution anticipated that perhaps we would need a Federal response when, in the words of the Constitution, as written by our Founding Fathers, that Congress can make or alter the rules regarding Federal elections.

The need for action could not be more serious. It has been almost a year since the violent mob of insurrectionists stormed into this Chamber and desecrated our Capitol. They came into this very room, rifled through the desks, were up there right on the dais where the Presiding Officer now presides. They came here, but what they did was not just an attack on a building, it was an attack on our Republic—an attack on our Republic.

I still can picture it like it just happened. Senator BLUNT and I were the last two remaining Senators in the Chamber at 3:30 in the morning, along with the incredible staff from the Parliamentarian's office, with the pages, along with Vice President Pence, and the two young women with that mahogany box filled with the remaining electoral ballots. We made our way over to the House of Representatives, where glass was smashed against the sides, where there was still spray paint on statues and on columns, and we finished our job.

Two weeks later, as we stood on that inaugural stage—Democrat and Republican leaders from both parties from this Chamber, all the Senators from this Chamber, leaders nationally—Republicans, Democrats stood on that

stage under that beautiful blue sky with little flakes of snow, and it was like everything was in technicolor. I said that day, this is a moment where democracy brushes itself off, stands straight and moves forward, one Nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

Maybe I was naive. I thought this was the moment in the middle of this raging pandemic that we were going to move forward as a country. And we did, but lurking—lurking—in the background were claims, false, incredibly dangerous claims that somehow the election was invalid and, along with that, a coordinated effort across the country to introduce bills—over 425 of them now—to make it harder, not easier, for people to vote.

What has been the result of this democracy on fire? What happened here in the Capitol is that canister of bear spray has been replaced by bill after bill after bill. Those flagpoles that were used to poke and jab at our brave officers who are here to defend us, resulting in several of their deaths—that has been replaced by repeated efforts to lie about the results of the election.

What has happened to our democracy? Members in this Chamber know well. This year alone, Capitol Police have responded to nearly 9,000 threats against Members of Congress since the beginning of the year—9,000 threats. That is nearly double the threats faced by Members just 3 years ago.

Election officials across the country have also been targeted by an overwhelming increase in the number of threats. Senator BLUNT and I held a Rules Committee hearing on this deeply disturbing trend this fall. We heard from the Kentucky Republican secretary of state who said if we do not act, States and localities will be unable to retain or recruit people to administer future elections. He talked about the need to make it very clear that local elected officials who are administering the election should be safe; that they should not be threatened.

Then we heard from others. Republican Philadelphia City Commissioner Al Schmidt shared some of the horrifying threats that he and his family have received after he stood up to lies about election fraud, including a message that said: “Tell the truth or your three kids will be fatally shot,” with the names of his 7-year-old son and his 11- and 14-year-old daughters, their address, photos of their house out on the internet.

Arizona Secretary of State Katie Hobbs, received a voice mail saying:

I am a hunter—and I think you should be hunted.

These aren't just a few examples; this is happening across our country. This is why we have united on this side of the aisle behind the Freedom to Vote Act. It takes these threats against these election officials head-on by establishing a right to vote and have every vote counted and protects election officials from improper removal

by partisan actors. You have to have—malfeasance has to occur to be removed.

There are protections against sham audits like the ones we saw in Arizona and the ones being advanced in Wisconsin, Michigan, Texas, and Pennsylvania and strengthens the protections for election workers by making it a Federal crime to “intimidate, threaten, or coerce” election workers.

It was during Senator Bob Dole's funeral service in Washington that President Biden reminded us what Senator Dole had once said. You see, Senator Dole stood against the tide. He supported civil rights legislation when that was a really hard thing to do. He supported the Martin Luther King holiday. And the words he said at that time ring true today. He said this:

No first-class democracy can treat people like second-class citizens.

No first-class democracy can treat people like second-class citizens.

His warning is exactly what is going on today: efforts to treat some Americans as second-class citizens by making them stand for hours and hours and hours to vote in lines; by telling them: Oh, by the way, you are not going to be able to, like you did before, get water or food from certain people who might give it to you while you are standing in line. That is the story we heard in Georgia; by telling them—like a bill that passed in Wisconsin that would have been put into law except for the Governor there. It said we are only going to have one dropoff box in the entire city of Milwaukee; or like what we saw in the last election in Texas, in Harris County, a county that has about as much people as my entire State: We are only going to have one dropoff box there in that county; taking away options for registering to vote; making it harder for people with disabilities or elderly voters to receive the assistance they need to make their voices heard; telling people: Oh, hey, if you have COVID and you are in the hospital and you want to apply for a mail-in ballot because you obviously aren't going to be able to go in and vote, you need to get a notary public to sign the application. South Carolina had taken that requirement away, and then they put it back in.

Over 400 bills were introduced in nearly every State to limit the freedom to vote, and over 30 already were signed into law. That is why we must now establish national standards for voting—completely allowed for in the Constitution—to make sure all voters can cast their ballots in the way that works best for them, regardless of what ZIP Code they live in.

The need for Federal action is urgent. Redistricting is underway to draw congressional maps that will define our democracy for the next decade. You know how many of these maps do not come close to reflecting, on a non-partisan basis, what goes on in the State.

We know what has been happening in Wisconsin. Actual—actual—ideas and

actual proposals are supported by someone in this very Chamber to take away the right of the bipartisan election board to count the ballots and instead have them counted by the legislature.

With 19 States having enacted laws this year to roll back the freedom to vote, we can't simply sit back and watch our democracy be threatened.

As Senator Rev. RAPHAEL WARNOCK has said, What is this all about?

Some people don't want some people to vote.

Whether our democracy is threatened with bear spray, crowbars, and axes, or long lines, no dropoff boxes, and secret money, it is still under siege, and we must stand up and do what is right. We want trust in our government—trust regardless of where people are politically.

You know, my State has one of the highest voter turnouts in the country, if not the highest every single time. We have elected a Republican Governor with those standards in Tim Pawlenty; we have elected a Democratic Governor in Tim Walz; and we have elected an Independent Governor in Jesse Ventura. What is the difference? People are part of the franchise. They come up, and they say: Look, I didn't vote for you, but I agreed with you on that; I didn't like what you did on that. They are part of the franchise.

As we have seen in States like Georgia, Florida, Iowa, Montana, and Texas, we are up against this coordinated attack. Our democracy cannot wait.

The infamous new law in Georgia says you can't vote on weekends, as I mentioned, in the runoff or register to vote during the runoff, and there are limitations when it comes to dropoff boxes for voting by mail and a new requirement—one that used to be in that was taken out for the pandemic because it was so confusing, and then it was put back in with this law—that you have to put a date on the outside of your inside envelope. What date would you think that would be? Anyone casting the ballot would think the date that I am voting. No, no. It is your birthday that has to be put on the outside of the envelope when you put that ballot in.

In Iowa, a new law cut the days of early voting by 9 days and will close the polls an hour early. This was after the State, in the words of its own Republican secretary of state, had “shattered” its voter turnout record last year.

Why do that except that you are trying to make it harder for certain people to vote. The words of a court about a North Carolina law years ago: Discrimination with surgical precision.

A new law in Montana that I noticed says you can no longer register to vote on election day after that having been an option in the State for 15 years.

In Texas, another new law eliminates drop boxes and puts new restrictions on vote-by-mail by also empowering partisan poll watchers.

That is why we need the Freedom to Vote Act, which builds on the framework put forward by our colleague and the former West Virginia secretary of state, JOE MANCHIN, in June. It includes key reforms like ensuring voters have access to at least 2 weeks of early voting and same-day registration and that voters can cast a mail-in ballot without an excuse.

Increasing transparency through the DISCLOSE Act. I don't care if you are a Democrat, Republican, Independent—whatever party you are in—you don't want to have money coming in an election, dark money that you can't even figure out where it is from, telling you stuff that you can't even figure out if it is true. This part of the bill would simply require super PACs and issue advocacy groups to disclose donors who contribute more than \$10,000 so at least we know who is putting in all that money to run ads so you understand why they are doing it.

It would prohibit partisan gerrymandering so voters choose their elected officials, not the elected officials choosing who votes for them.

And we need to enact the bill now to give States time to implement these reforms.

As I noted, the Freedom to Vote Act has the support of all 50 Senate Democrats. We have talked to our Republican colleagues about this as well as the John Lewis bill. Why have we done that? Well, for decades voting rights has been a bipartisan issue. In 2006, the Voting Rights Act was reauthorized by a vote of 98 to 0. Yes, 2006; it is not that long ago—98 to 0.

This bill already includes bipartisan profiles that included many of our Republican colleagues. I know the Honest Ads Act is in this bill. That is a bill I did first with John McCain, whom we so dearly miss, and now with Senator GRAHAM; the Secure Elections Act, which is about backup paper ballots and making sure that we don't have foreign interference on our elections. That is the bill Senator LANKFORD and I introduced together with the support of Senators BURR and WARNER and Senator GRAHAM.

But in October, when we had a vote to open debate on the Freedom to Vote Act, not a single one of our Republican colleagues voted to even debate the bill. I see Senator MURKOWSKI is here who did allow a vote to open debate on the John Lewis bill, which is very important to our country. She stood up and said: Look, I may not agree with everything in this bill, but we should allow for debate.

Let's be clear again, article I, section 4 of the Constitution of the United States of America empowers Congress to make or alter rules for Federal elections at any time. I believe this provision was designed to help us in times like these, in times where we are seeing an assault on elections, where people are increasingly starting to distrust the results of elections.

In the face of complete obstruction on something so fundamental as the

Freedom to Vote Act, we must restore the Senate with rule changes that will allow us to debate this bill.

Now, I just want to briefly address this. Throughout Senate history, rules governing debate have changed multiple times.

We just somehow found a way to vote on what was good, and that was the debt ceiling vote—hmm, a little bit of a change to allow us to do that with a 51-vote margin. In fact, there are already 161 exceptions—exceptions to the filibuster.

Even the number of votes needed to end debate has changed. In 1975, Senator Mondale led the successful and bipartisan effort that reduced the cloture threshold from 67 to 60 votes.

There have been cries for standing debates—standing—what is called a standing filibuster. Why is that? Because instead of an empty Chamber right now, except for me and Senator MURKOWSKI and the Presiding Officer from the great State of Nevada, there is no one else here.

And yet we have so many serious things before us. We have a continuing raging pandemic. We have climate change that is causing weather events we never thought possible, including thunderstorms in the middle of the State of Minnesota in the middle of December. Never in history have we had a tornado warning in our State in the middle of December.

We have had tragedies across the Midwest with storms of magnitude we never thought possible. We have rising—no. Are we discussing that? No. Are we discussing voting and what is happening in this country right now, except for me giving this long speech? No, we are not.

So I think we know that this isn't the Senate that is supposed to be the world's greatest deliberative body, that is supposed to allow us to have votes on amendments and discussions on serious issues, not to ram through things but to have discussions on serious issues so we can make decisions.

Do you think the rest of the world isn't watching what is going on here right now? Simple attempts to do something about childcare or preschool or reducing the prices of prescription drugs, when we pay more in our country for prescription drugs than any other country in the world, and we are getting blocked from bringing those bills forward to have actual discussions on them or trying to fit them in little boxes of how they fit some archaic Senate rule.

Even Senator Robert Byrd said, when he was advocating for rule reforms way back in 1979: "Certain rules that were necessary . . . must be changed to reflect changed circumstances."

Well, I think an all-out assault on our democracy—that is a changed circumstance, where at least we should be debating the solution in this Chamber. I think being unable to advance things that we know we have to tackle, not just immediate crisis, because we are

pretty good at those—we are pretty good when a financial crisis occurs or when we have storms or floods or tornadoes or hurricanes. We are pretty good at getting the funds out and rescue help out there.

But not everything is an immediate crisis. It is just a crisis about to happen, and our job, our duty when we take that oath is to protect the Constitution. That is what we want to debate right now on this floor, instead of in another empty Chamber. And with the standing filibuster, requiring people to be here and debate and speak, it is not just an old movie, then; it is real life. Requiring people to actually be here and do their jobs—big surprise, news bulletin—we are here debating real issues and legislation and voting on amendments and doing our jobs, instead of just running back in here every four hours and making a vote and then going back out and making phone calls.

Protecting the freedom to vote has never been easy. Throughout our country's 245-year history, we have had to course-correct to ensure that our democracy for the people, by the people actually lived up to its ideals. Voting is how Americans control their government and hold elected officials accountable.

So for anyone watching this at home, do you want to hold people accountable? It is by making sure that they have the right to vote, so they can exercise their right to vote, and their views at the polls in a safe way, across this Nation.

And do you want to hold them accountable? It is by actually having votes on bills and actually debating the issues of our time as the rest of the world watches what should be the beacon of democracy.

It strengthens our hand with the rest of the world. It makes us stronger when our democracy is functioning and working, and not when we have a bunch of people in here with bear spray and bayonets going after our police officers.

That is the vision, I am sorry to say, that much of the world saw less than a year ago. And that is not the lasting vision that we want of this Chamber or of this democracy.

Americans have fought and died to protect our freedom to vote. They have done so on the battlefield and in marches during the civil rights movement, and 56 years after the Voting Rights Act was passed by this Chamber and signed into law, we still continue this fight.

But just as we know from those trying to keep their fellow Americans from voting, those trying to undermine our very system of government in State after State across the country, they are not going to stop until we make clear that there is something larger than ourselves. As John McCain used to say, there is nothing more liberating than a cause larger than yourself.

That cause, my friends in this Chamber, is our very democracy, and that is why we won't stop. Our Nation was founded on the ideals of democracy, and we have seen for ourselves in this building how we can't afford to take it for granted.

We have a lot of work to do in rebuilding our country. And, no, we should not go home tomorrow. No, we should not, not when this is at stake. We must stand up for the salvation of our democracy.

And each day that we delay, it gets harder and harder to undo what is being done. We owe it to our country and to the future generation of Americans to take care of this country.

We are the stewards, my friends, of this Nation right now and our democracy. So many people before us have found a way to do the right thing. And in the words of Bob Dole, in a first-class democracy, the people deserve better than being treated like second-class citizens.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I have come to this floor to speak on a matter that is very local to Alaska, very important to Alaska. But before I begin my comments, I want to acknowledge a few of the comments of my friend from Minnesota.

Clearly, we share some of the same passions about the protections of our democracy, and I would absolutely agree that key and most fundamental is that right to vote. And I have clearly expressed that we, as lawmakers, need to be there to ensure that our elections are free, fair, and accessible to all, that barriers to voting need to be addressed.

She has noted that I have joined with others to try to address what I believe are some of those impediments to voting through a measure that has been proposed to the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. It is not perfect by any stretch of the imagination, in my view, but I do think that it is something that is worthy of the debate. I was going to call it grand debate on the floor, but as she appropriately points out, there is not a lot of grand debate that goes on. More often than not, it is individuals who are speaking to those who are taking the time out of their day to tune in to C-SPAN.

But these are important discussions for us to have. But I also recognize that enduring legislation comes about not because one party is able to make that happen on their own. Enduring legislation, whether it is the Civil Rights Act or whether it was the Voting Rights Act—the enduring legislation that stays with us for generations and decades—is that that is achieved when we have come together.

We will never—it is very, very difficult to get entire consent of the body. But when we can achieve that bipartisan support and a recognition that this is good for both parties, good for all areas of America, this is when we do

our best, when we come together to address these.

And I hear the clear frustration that she has expressed, but I also recognize that how we do what we do is important. And if we peel away the last vestiges of protection for minority rights in the Senate, the Senate becomes a smaller version of the House, where you are able to effectively move things through just by the raw numbers.

And so these are hard, these are challenging, these are worthy of our further and additional efforts. But I would remind us that as we are seeking to make these generational differences, as we are seeking to provide for these enduring protections for democracy, that how we get there is also a matter of importance to this body.

(The remarks of Ms. MURKOWSKI pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 482 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The Senator from Utah.

VACCINES

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I am here on the Senate floor now for the 21st time specifically to oppose President Biden's sweeping vaccine mandates.

I have introduced over a dozen bills to one way or another limit, clarify, or counteract the mandates. Every time I have come to ask the Senate to pass what should, frankly, be uncontroversial matters, one of my colleagues or another from the other side of the aisle has come to object. This is unfortunate. It is unfortunate, really, for a number of reasons.

These mandates, while currently being challenged in court in a number of jurisdictions, show the terrible power that even the threat of a vaccine mandate can wield. Businesses across the country are suspending, punishing, and firing employees who haven't had the COVID shot. The threat of the mandate is making it harder for everyday American families just to put food on the table and to do so, moreover, in increasingly difficult economic times.

Now, these are not our enemies. These are not people to be feared. These are not people to shun or loathe entirely, as the mandates seem to suggest. No. No. These are our friends and our neighbors. These are mothers and fathers. These are people who, like far too many Americans, are just struggling to get by.

I am going to continue to fight for them and to protect them because they understand something that President Biden has yet to accept even though, deep down, I know he does know it, and that is, this isn't right. It is not right for him to do. It is not right constitutionally for about a dozen reasons, but it is also just not right morally.

It is a morally unacceptable proposition to suggest that someone should get fired just because they don't conform to Presidential medical orthodoxy. It is immoral to tell someone

that their ability to put food on the table for their children depends on whether they get a shot—a shot that they may or may not want; a shot that may or may not conflict with their religious or sincerely held beliefs, that might be contraindicated by one or more conditions, resulting in their doctors advising them not to get the shot.

This is not something that anyone should do. In fact, the American people agree. According to a recent Axios poll, only 14 percent of Americans—just 14 out of every 100 Americans—agree with the apparent position of the President of the United States that if someone doesn't get the shot, they should be fired. I would imagine it is even fewer than that. Fourteen out of a hundred isn't very many to begin with, but I am pretty sure it is even fewer than that—far fewer—who would say that it is OK for one person within the Federal Government to decide to fire everyone who doesn't comply within the government and also to tell private employers that they will receive crippling, company-destroying fines—that no company, not even the wealthiest out there, could live with—if they don't fire every one of their employees or otherwise take adverse action against them in their declining to take the shot. It is not OK.

In this effort, I have, to be sure, been supremely clear. I am not in any way against the COVID-19 vaccinations—quite to the contrary. I have been vaccinated. I have encouraged people to seek out all the relevant information and be vaccinated. I believe that the COVID-19 vaccines are keeping countless Americans safe from the harm threatened by the COVID-19 virus.

This is different than that. As a matter of fact, there is an undercut, and it can't offset the fact that this mandate is pushing government control beyond the constitutional limits and into the private decisions of the American people.

That is why I am against all of these mandates for all age groups, and that is why I have come to the Senate floor repeatedly to help and to call on my colleagues and President Biden himself to end this madness once and for all, to end it before it is too late, to end it before irreparable harm is inflicted on those who, for whatever reason, can't or are otherwise inclined not to comply with his directions.

I have even offered a bill, one that should be unusually, uniquely uncontroversial, but even that one met objection. It was a simple reaffirmation of parental rights that our government has respected and honored and even protected from the beginning.

My Parental Consent for Vaccination Act would simply require that any COVID-19 vaccine mandate issued by the Federal Government—to be clear, it shouldn't be issuing any at all, but any of them that it happens to issue must be a mandate that includes a requirement that informed parental consent be provided before the shot can be administered to a minor.